

Prince of Peace Episcopal Church
BISHOP'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING

June 12, 2023, 6:30 p.m.

This special meeting was held several weeks after Rachel Bertoni resigned from the BAC. The date of this meeting was changed so all current members could attend. Sue Rembert made it possible for this meeting to be held at the clubhouse at Arrowhead Mobile Park in NE Salem. Because the discussion at this special meeting tended to be free-flowing, these notes are organized by topic and are not strictly chronological.

Dinner was served at 6:00 and the meeting began at 6:30.

Present in person: Nancy Mortenson, new Senior Warden-elect; Nick Fortey (2024), Jr. Warden; Mary Macy (2025), Treasurer; Ann McBride (2024); Sue Rembert (2024); Bill Dalton (2025); Barb Barb (2026); Mary Knutsen (2026); and Barbara Ross (Clerk)

Opening prayer: Nancy opened the meeting with the *Collect for Guidance* from the Book of Common Prayer.

Opening remarks:

Nancy began by quoting a line from The Rev. Linda Woods' most recent sermon with us: "Church is messy." Nancy observed that Prince of Peace has gone a bit astray from having healthy communication and relationships. She said we all need to get on the same page, get unified and move forward.

Approval of the Agenda:

There was not a written agenda for this special meeting but it was agreed that our main goals were to work toward adopting a Behavioral Covenant as requested by The Rev. Chris Craun, diocesan Missioner for Thriving Congregations and to finalize the schedule and details for the visit of a perspective priest on June 15-16.

Approval of the minutes:

Minutes from the May 17 meeting were approved. M/S/P

Status of the development of our property

Due to our recent internal struggles, Bishop Diana has put further discussion of the development of our property on hold.

Our Relationship with the Diocese

1. Chris Craun requested that we work with a facilitator and offered the services of The Rev. Gail Greenwell to be with us on June 3. Because several of our BAC members were going to be out-of-town that day, we respectfully declined and shared our desire to have at least one meeting on our own before meeting with a facilitator.
2. Some frustration was expressed over what was perceived as continuing directives from the diocese.
3. A desire was expressed for us to be more empowered to handle our own affairs.

4. Others spoke up with the reminder that The Episcopal Church is hierarchical and that as a mission church we are under the authority of the Bishop.
5. In the Episcopal Church there are recognized lines of authority as well as appropriate channels for communication.
6. Because we have not been able to work out our differences at the congregational level, our relationships with the Bishop's Office and with one another have been damaged.

Communication Concerns:

1. It is critical that all members of the BAC have the same information. We should not have side conversations either in person or on-line.
2. Emails regarding the BAC should be copied to all BAC members.
3. We also need to remember that email works well for exchanging information but it does not work well for communicating feelings.
4. If we have concerns about one another or about others in the congregation, we need to share our concerns with the Senior Warden with whom a decision about how best to proceed can be discussed.
5. BAC decisions should be made through a process of group discussion and consensus rather than by individuals.
6. We should not take it upon ourselves to confront others directly either in person or through email.
7. There was general agreement that because as a group, we have unresolved feelings from recent meetings, it would be helpful for us to work with a facilitator.

Ideas that may be helpful for our meetings:

1. Adopt a timed agenda.
2. Set aside a few minutes at the beginning of the meeting for people to check in as to their current feelings.
3. Continue to begin meetings with Bible Study.
4. Agree that everyone will read all informational items that are sent out prior to the meeting.
5. Utilize a consent agenda to handle routine items such as the approval of minutes and the final approval of items that have already been discussed so we have more time for items that require a deeper discussion.
6. Request the clerk to keep track of action items so at the end of the meeting everyone is clear on their next steps.
7. Set aside some time at the end of the meeting to process feelings about how the meeting went.
8. During this transition time, it may be helpful to meet twice a month.

Ideas that may be helpful to the life of the congregation:

1. Use and publicize the Committee Structure so members of the congregation are clear as to who is working on what.
2. Use and publicize a Communication Flow Chart so members of the congregation know with whom to share ideas and concerns.
3. Revitalize coffee hour.

4. Make sure we have opportunities to laugh together.
5. Do more fun things together. Ideas included a picnic or movie night, hikes with lunch, etc.
6. Continue efforts to let the whole congregation know what is going on.

Things that need immediate attention because Marcia and/or Rachel previously took care of them:

1. IT items such as dual-factor authentications, paying for and holding the website; maintaining the website and online calendar
2. Audio-visual maintenance and use such as microphones, cameras
3. Weekly announcements to the congregation
4. Monthly or quarterly newsletter

Discussion of a Behavioral Covenant

1. We shared four covenant possibilities
 - a. The Meeting Guidelines (Code of Conduct) that the BAC revised in April of 2021.
 - b. The Behavioral Covenant that Father Steve Ellis shared with us.
 - c. The Touchstones from Parker Palmer's Center for Courage and Renewal that Chris+ suggested as a possibility.
 - d. The Respectful Communication Guidelines from Eric Law's Kaleidoscope Institute that have been a part of the Diocese of Oregon's anti-racism training in the past.
2. The group was most receptive to the Respectful Communication Guidelines so those will be explored further at our next meeting.

Status of Senior Warden

1. Nancy Mortenson said she has been invited by Bishop Diana to serve as our next Senior Warden and is willing to serve for one year to help us through this transition period.
2. She and the Bishop have been trading phone calls so she has not been officially approved.
3. Nancy has only attended one Prince of Peace BAC meeting in the past and that one went sideways.
4. If approved, she will need our help and support.
5. Mary Knutsen gave her a copy of the Vestry Guide.
6. Nancy has a good friend at St. Barnabas who is willing to work with her and with us on how to run a meeting.

Visit of Priest Candidate

1. Our current priest candidate will be visiting this weekend, June 15-16.
2. Mary Knutsen shared the schedule that she and Sally Clay of St. Thomas have worked out.
3. The schedule includes time at both Prince of Peace and St. Thomas.
4. Members of the BAC are encouraged to attend at least one of the scheduled meals.
 - a. BAC members will pay for their own meals.
 - b. Our guest's hotel, meals, and mileage will be split between the two congregations.

5. Mary Knutsen is putting together a welcome basket of items
 - a. Map of Salem
 - b. Wine
 - c. Real estate information
 - d. Other items from Made in Oregon

Gibson Creek worship

1. Sue reported that Gibson Creek is undergoing remodeling to change from an assisted living facility to a memory care facility.
2. They currently have only eight residents but are still appreciative of us leading worship there twice a month.

End of meeting check-in

1. Appreciation was expressed to Sue for arranging the meeting space and providing dinner.
2. Appreciation was expressed for tonight's dialogue and clarification of appropriate communication channels.
3. We need to improve communication not only among ourselves but also with the congregation.
4. Support was again expressed for working with a facilitator.

Closing Prayer

Nancy read *The Night Prayer* from The New Zealand Book of Common Prayer.

Action items

1. Mary Macy will work on an organizational chart.
2. Mary Macy or Barb Ross will send out the Respectful Communication Guidelines.
3. Barb Ross will send notes from Zoom interview with candidate to Nancy.
4. Everyone will attend as much of the interview schedule as possible, though it was suggested that people choose between lunch and dinner on Friday in order to keep the meal groups a bit smaller.

Next Regular Meeting will be Wednesday, June 21 at the church.

Dinner at 6:00. Meeting at 6:30.

Meeting notes submitted by
Barbara Ross, Clerk